

# POINT 3

THE TOC H MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2001



Bringing people together

## OUR MOSLEM FRIENDS

### BUILDING BRIDGES IN BRADFORD

Once again Toc H ran a joint project in Bradford with the Council for Mosques. It was a playscheme for children between 6 and 13. There were 16 volunteers, including three from both Germany and Belgium. Of the ten British, six were recruited locally by the Council for Mosques. Brian Ball, one of the volunteers, reports...

'When I first put my name down to take part on a project in Bradford, it was just one of our northern cities. It is now a very special place for me...

...the playscheme was hard work, as those who have done similar projects will agree. The kids were lively - sometimes too lively - as all kids are. Occasionally a child would have to be excluded from the next day's events for something they had done or said. But I was particularly struck by the girl who, having been excluded, came round to our house to apologise to Carl, one of the volunteers.

During the time off we enjoyed some of the sights and sounds of Bradford. We were treated to orange juice and cakes on the lawn outside the Cathedral by Geoff's successor as Dean. There was the Channel 4 Roadshow in the City's main square, with music and dancing one night, and an excellent free film on a huge screen which we watched from



Joyce Clarysse from Belgium meets Aliya and Bila Ahmed. Photo courtesy of the Telegraph and Argus, Bradford.

deck-chairs in the northern drizzle! For me, the evening that we all spent together, Toc H and local volunteers, was a special one.

My grateful thanks to those who organised it... especially Saleem and Tasleem at the Council of Mosques, and Karen and Gwen who led it. To many in Britain, the name Bradford is associated with some of the worst violence seen in recent years. The horrific events in the U.S.A. may mean that the Muslim community there has to suffer increased abuse and violence. How privileged Toc H is for the opportunity to help build bridges there.'

### ON CAMERA

For some years there has been a tradition of families from the East London 'Families under Pressure' scheme visiting Toc H branches. Recently families - many of them Moslem - have enjoyed days at Tunbridge Wells, at Margate and at Hoddesdon, hosted by Toc H. It gives them a chance to see a different side of Britain from the East End, and gives local Toc H members the chance to learn more about life there. Moreover, at this sad time it seems even more important to build personal friendships with Moslem families.

On the recent trips to Margate and Tunbridge Wells BBC's 'Look East' programme came along to film. As John Burgess said 'They seem to like what we do'. Our photo shows them at work at Margate and we look forward to some welcome publicity.



### IN THIS ISSUE:

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**Toc H Chaplaincy:  
Prophecy and Discernment**

**World Chain of Light**

**An Historic Council**

### Toc H

**Toc H is committed to building a fairer society by working with communities to promote friendship and service, confront prejudice and practise reconciliation.**

Toc H is about people. Founded in 1915, Toc H works to break down barriers between people by challenging their prejudices about others and the divisions which exist in society. Its work is based on Christian principles, and people of all faiths, and of none, are welcomed.

Toc H works with people from all walks of life, tackling social problems, such as loneliness and deprivation, through an approach which emphasises self-help, and encourages people to accept responsibility for themselves and their local community.

Toc H uses the model of the compass to offer four personal challenges which are the inspiration for its members.

These 'Four Points of the Compass' are set out on page 2.

Toc H is a registered charity No 211042.

## THE 2002 VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

It is now time for event organisers to prepare and submit entries for the printed VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME for 2002. The deadline is Wednesday 31st October. Further details and forms for entries are available from Volunteer Co-ordinators.

Those planning events are asked to consider, first, whether they might be based at one of our own residential centres or camp-sites. They need support, and it is helpful to keep funds within the movement whenever possible. They are all listed on the Toc H website - [www.toch.org.uk](http://www.toch.org.uk)

The Toc H website also carries details of the Volunteer Programme, and events can be posted there as soon as they have been arranged. So, if you have details of your event(s) earlier than the deadline, please send them to the Editor as soon as you can.

### The Four Points of the Compass are:

1. **Friendship** - 'To Love Widely' - to welcome all in friendship,
2. **Service** - 'To Build Bravely' - to give personal service.
3. **Fairmindedness** - 'To Think Fairly' - to listen always to the views of others and to find one's own convictions.
4. **The Kingdom of God** - 'To Witness Humbly' - to acknowledge the spiritual nature of man, to practise the Christian way of life, and to help the truth to prevail.

Point 3 is the magazine of Toc H. It takes its name from the 3rd Point of the Toc H Compass, 'Fairmindedness'. It seeks to inform, to encourage and to stimulate.

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A full copy of the current editorial policy is available on request from the Editor.

The opinions expressed are those of the individual concerned and not necessarily the views of the Editor or of Toc H.

While Point 3 is made available to all members free of charge, voluntary contributions are welcome.

The Editors reserve the right to cut or précis articles and letters submitted unless the writer specifically stipulates otherwise.

*Printed on chlorine-free,  
environmentally friendly paper.*

# AN HISTORIC COUNCIL

*From Geoffrey Smith, Director*

At its meeting to be held at The Hayes, Swanwick in November, Council will be asked to reaffirm Toc H core values as enshrined in the 'Four Points of the Compass'.

During the debate there will be an opportunity for Councillors to consider and to confirm ways in which these values are expressed through our charitable purposes.

There will be an opportunity to agree new policies for branch and member development, Families under Pressure, Friendship Circles and the Volunteer Programme. Toc H's financial crisis will also come in for scrutiny and Council will be asked to agree how these charitable purposes are paid for. This will provide the Honorary Treasurer with an opportunity to present his budget and explain how he balances it after five years.

Finally, Council will be asked how we should manage all of this work.

Not only for our own benefit as stewards of a trust, but also to satisfy the external regulator who needs to be reassured that we are handling public money in a responsible manner.

This will be an historic Council. The matters it debates represent a very considerable burden of responsibility, but it does come back to some very basic questions.

What is Toc H for?

What are its values?

How does it express those values in practice?

What does Toc H do?

How does Toc H pay for its work?

How does Toc H manage its work?

By the end of Council we hope to have answered those questions and to have set the movement on course for service in the 21st Century.



*Members of Netherfield Branch at their Rededication Service in July. This was the culmination of a Toc H Day at which the new branch had welcomed members from Kent and nearby. During the Service the old Margate Women's Lamp, used until now by Thanet Branch, was presented to Netherfield.*

## WELCOME

We extend a warm welcome to:

**Christine Duncan** (Development Officer) and **Cath Helsby** (part-time Admin. Officer) who have joined the staff team on the Cheshire 'Families under Pressure' scheme

**Mukesh Varia**, who has joined the Central Services staff as Membership/ Database Operator

**Annelies Vermeulen**, who has been appointed to the new post of Co-ordinator of Talbot House, Poperinge

## Welcome to our New Members

**Sandra Tregear** - S.W.Region  
**Edith Hale** - S.W.Region  
**Beverley Machin** - S.W.Region  
**Joyce Mitchell** - Saltford  
**Viola Harper** - Broughton Astley

## Guest Members

**Michael Reed, Maggie Bradley,**  
**Ruth Price** - West Mids and S.Wales Region  
**Adam Rogers, Robert Fyffe,**  
**Ruth Hanson** - N. Wales and N.West Region  
**Gwendoline Beamond** - Scotland Region  
**Mary Tibbett-Markevich** - S.West Region  
**Maria Gentile, Martina Tomassini** - S.E.Region

# TOC H INDIA has much to teach us

By John Weir

(As David Coleman explains elsewhere in this issue, John has recently been appointed Toc H National Chaplain. This is, of course, subject to the usual confirmation at Central Council - Ed)

If you look up Toc H on the Internet, you may find the impressive Toc H Public School in Cochin, in South India. It had intrigued me for months so, while making a personal visit to the Church of South India in August, I made a pastoral visit to Toc H in India. I found Toc H active, enthusiastic and an inspiration.

The monsoon rains poured down, the air was heavy and humid, but the warmth of my welcome from all members of this large school of 1800 showed how delighted they were to receive a visit from Toc H in the United Kingdom.

Tubby Clayton inaugurated Toc H in India in St. Mary's Cathedral, Madras, in 1925. He is so respected there that they speak of it as if it were yesterday. Time is different in India. They treated me with an equal honour I do not deserve. When I entered the school I am sure Tubby's ghost had preceded me. There was a real sense of friendliness and optimism, and I smiled to see the Tubby-like notices adorning the walls - 'A small key opens big doors'; 'Catch your bear before you sell its skin'; 'Many receive advice, only the wise profit from it'. 'You should have said *'To Pessimists - Way Out'*' I suggested, thinking of the notice that welcomes visitors inside the door at Talbot House. 'We do not have any pessimists' was their confident reply.

I could understand that as I made myself comfortable in their fine new Toc H Hostel, grateful for the air-conditioning supplied by Toc H



The members who built the Toc H Public School (left to right) Prof P. J. Joseph, Mr K. Varghese (Toc H Commissioner), Mr K. A. Simon and Mr C. I. Cherian with (centre) John Weir.

Cochin. The three storey Hostel was being built bravely around me; the masons laying the marble floors, the blacksmiths shaping the ironwork fencing on the boundary walls that marked the land reclaimed from the lagoon. A lively school shaping young minds with the principles of Toc H was a symbol of hope for the future.

## THE MEANING OF TOC H

'What does Toc H mean?' I asked the children. 'The touch of Christ's healing!' was their confident reply, and they listened to my stories of Flanders and the trenches, and the Rev Tubby Clayton and those friendships that founded our international movement for peace. But to them, Toc H meant their school of Christian, Hindu and Moslem friends who were building a new India. I told them of the Upper Room at Poperinge, and they said 'Come and see our chapel!' where they regularly prayed, a page from the Holy Bible was read and displayed every day, and there was that same simple sense of holiness.

August 15th was India's National Day and the school band played as the local politician arrived for a rally organised by Toc H. Toc H is respected by church, by politicians, by educationalists and by businessmen. I was honoured to give the keynote address

contrasting the politician's speech on India and the war with Pakistan with a simpler message of peace, as propounded by Ghandi, Tagore... and Toc H!

## A PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

'Was this just a Toc H hotspot - a one-off, unique experience?' I wondered as my express bus thundered over potholed roads into the jungles of Kerala to

preaching engagements in other parts of India. But Tubby's ghost, loved and respected in India, sat guru-like at every meeting, and smiled mystically down at me. 'I was chaplain of Toc H'; said the Bishop of North Kerala. 'My father is a Toc H man' said the librarian at Bangalore's United Theological Seminary. 'Do you have the address of Toc H Australia?' asked the nameless gentleman on a bus when he saw my Toc H sweatshirt. 'Will you come and pray with a very sick Toc H member?' I was asked. As Toc H chaplain this was a journey that I was realising God wanted me to make.

So Toc H in India is a pearl of great price. I am ever grateful to have discovered it. I came to bring the love and prayers of Toc H in England. I return with greater treasures; a much wider love, a commitment to braver building, a greater respect for the message of peace Toc H offers, and a humility for the faith of those teachers, lovely children and Toc H members new and old in India, which has so much to teach us all.

## Postscript:

My gratitude goes to Captain G. S. Bhaskaran, Deputy Commissioner Toc H India, who travelled from Madras to welcome me and became a good friend.

# WORLD CHAIN OF LIGHT 2001

**T**he World Chain of Light starts this year in Zimbabwe. Copies of the World Chain of Light Service are available, free, from Central Services at Wendover. Copies will be sent anyway to Regional and Branch Secretaries, and staff, but if any other members wish to have a copy, write in.

The message this year, incorporated in the order of service, is both challenging and reassuring. It includes the following:-

Zimbabwe has been in the spotlight in the world's media, to a greater or lesser extent, ever since the outbreak

of political violence associated with the parliamentary elections last year. The illegal occupation of commercial farms continues as the general level of violence and lawlessness increases. The independence of our judiciary is now threatened and the freedom of the press is under attack. The economy is on the verge of collapse, and many who can are emigrating while those who remain live under a cloud of fear. Those who have taken a stand for justice, freedom and peace have often done so at great personal cost. And all this in a country that was already suffering the dire effects of the AIDS pandemic, with a

estimated 25% of the population being HIV positive and the average life expectancy reduced to 35 years.

This then is the sombre background against which we send out this message of hope, yes HOPE! Looking upwards at the awesome beauty of the night sky in Africa - the magnificent Milky Way on a clear night - we are reminded that the stars are best seen on the darkest of nights. In the same way, we see Christ the 'living hope' most clearly when other hopes have been extinguished and other lights have gone out...

## REACHING FOR THE SKY



**M**any members aged 77 are beginning to take things easy. Not so Olive Tennant, from Dereham, who recently had a trip in a Microlight aircraft. Her sponsored flight in August raised over £1,400 for her local hospice. She supports the hospice because her 10-year old granddaughter, Lucy, has been much helped by it. Olive's flight lasted 45 minutes. She reached a height of 2,500 feet on the

trip which went from near Cromer as far as Blakeney and included time over the sea. She really enjoyed seeing the miniature world below; 'The local steam railway looked just like a Hornby set' she said.

Olive had been in a glider before, so she was not entirely new to being up high. Overall, Olive's verdict was 'awe inspiring and absolutely fascinating - the nearest thing to being a bird!' Some bird, Olive!

## IN BRIEF • IN BRIEF • IN BRIEF

No less than 83 people took part in the third Toc H London Walk, 'Saints, Sinners and Stale Knights'. The youngest was in a push-chair; the veteran was Joan Nicholas of Wolverhampton at a sprightly 75. And it was good to see a fit Arthur Heffernan completing the course with Jean. Just under half the walkers were new to Toc H - some walking for fun and others to raise money for other charities. They raised £1700, and helped two Hospices, Victim Support, Christian Aid and other lesser known causes. The Toc H walkers raised something over £1500 for Toc H. We were once again indebted to the Museum of London for their hospitality and help.

Members of the **East London Families Project** have brought a touch of the countryside to the heart of the East End. An overgrown area alongside the Ensign Youth Club has been transformed into a productive vegetable garden (see photo). This year's harvest includes tomatoes, beans, spinach, pumpkins, aubergines, mustard, coriander and a 4lb marrow.



**Parkhurst Women's Branch** on the Isle-of-Wight held a successful mini-market in June. Despite wet weather, and other competing attractions in the town that day, a very successful event raised over £300 for the Friends of Khasdobir.

The success was partly due to excellent publicity. A write-up appeared in the local paper before the event, and there was a broadcast on Isle-of-Wight Radio.

The volunteer group (with Neville Timmins - skipper and project leader - one from the left) with some of the day's passengers during the **Kennet and Avon Canal Project**. Each day for a week the team entertained a different group of visitors from Swindon Self-Help groups on the Bruce Trust boat, 'Diana'.



In response to an article in the magazine 'My weekly', **Watford Ladies Branch** set to fill a number of shoe boxes to be given to children and elderly people in Romania.

# TOC H CHAPLAINCY : PROPHECY AND DISCERNMENT

*David Coleman - South Western Chaplain*

**O**f all the subjects currently in question for Toc H in the Business Plan, there is one which sticks in my mind as receiving the most emotive and positive response at Council in 2000, that of a new-look Chaplaincy.

It was clearly in the movement's interest, therefore, that people were sought out and invited to take on the roles of Chaplain in the new scheme of things, and that they should then take time out to discern together how this needs to be worked out.

This article is a description of some of the major points we discussed, and the agreements we reached together, over a few days in Poperinge in May this year.

## **STRUCTURE AND STAFFING**

Implementing the vision of the Business Plan leads us to have five honorary posts for people who will be called Toc H Chaplains. To date, four of these posts have attracted names, and these are nominated as follows:

Hon. National Chaplain (subject to confirmation by Central Council):

**John Weir**

Hon. North Regional Chaplain:

**Jonathan Adams**

Hon. Midlands Regional Chaplain: **TBD**

Hon. South Eastern Regional Chaplain:  
**Colin Elliot**

Hon. South Western Regional Chaplain:  
**David Coleman**

The National Chaplain will carry the responsibility of leading the Chaplaincy team, which will be supported by the Regional Chaplains. The regional appointments would be based on the proposed four regional companies of Toc H from the Business Plan. Once up and running, future appointments would be made by the National organisation, but it is hoped that nominations for Chaplains will come from the regions themselves.

## **TOC H - SECULAR OR SACRED?**

Any discussion of Toc H chaplaincy must inevitably come back to the knotty problem of the Christian basis

of the movement, and how that can be seen as relevant to today's culture and climate. In fact, I've been a member of Toc H for over 25 years, and even when I joined this issue was being debated, so nothing's really changed. It certainly won't be resolved over-night either, but perhaps Toc H Chaplains need to take on the challenge of meeting it.

As Chaplains, we do not believe that we are called to actively promote an exclusively Christian membership of Toc H, nor to try to 'convert' people. However, Toc H does stem from a Christian tradition, and its charitable aims are about promoting values which were originally identified by its Founder Padre as being Christian.

We agreed together that Chaplaincy in Toc H should exist to form a bridge between the Christian principles upon which Toc H remains based, and the secular society in which Toc H operates. It is up to people individually to dare to take a journey with us on that bridge.

## **ORGANISATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

Since the Business plan identifies the function of four regional Toc H companies, then the Chaplaincy must clearly engage with them. It is proposed that, as an implementation of the Plan, each of the Toc H Chaplains would be an ex-officio member of the Regional or National company board, to serve the movement by acting as a sort of "conscience" for the membership.

## **GOALS AND SELECTION**

Chaplains will have a job description agreed nationally although, clearly, regional Chaplains may well need to negotiate with their board over specific additional tasks which may be needed to serve the region.

The goals of any Chaplain should include:

- To enable people to experience the spiritual dimension in all Toc H activities through reflection, and to help people explore a theology which

arises out of the 'Toc H experience'.

- To offer spiritual nurture to Toc H members, and anyone who participates in its activities.
- To recognise that society struggles with the issues raised by gender, class and race, and to seek to ensure that Toc H continues to be guided by all four 'Points of the Compass'.
- To offer and display a listening ministry of advocacy and bridge-building, as a model of engagement for Toc H as a whole.

Those appointed to the post of "Toc H Chaplain" are to reflect the nature of the Christian Church, and therefore should have been admitted into an authorised ordained or lay ministry within a Christian denomination (e.g. Clergy, Pastors, Local Preachers, C of E Readers etc).

In today's multi-faith culture, we must recognise that people who engage in Toc H activities and are members are just as likely to be members of religions other than Christian. We therefore propose that Toc H has not just Chaplains but a "Chaplaincy Team" which will include not only the appointed Chaplains but spiritual advisers of other faith communities.

## **A JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES...**

We are beginning our new Chaplaincy with one or two single steps. We already have most of the people to fill the roles of "Toc H Chaplain". We have set out what we have agreed together should be our goals, and understood where the Chaplains need to engage with the organisation of the movement.

There are many questions we can explore together as we travel with Toc H, but perhaps the most perplexing is this:

When we came back into England from Poperinge, how come the photo in Geoff Smith's passport was far better looking than him, and had a full head of hair?

Hmmmmmm...

## NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE SUCCESS

This well-proven adage describes, aptly, the present state of affairs at Walsall. By personal contact the branch has recruited three new members recently, all of whom are making an extensive and exciting contribution towards the life of the unit. With branch attendance averaging nine members plus fairly frequent visitors, we are enjoying an interesting and often challenging programme, coupled with the ability and enthusiasm to undertake service activities.

As the current chairman, it is my privilege to lead a branch with a most optimistic outlook, very reminiscent of its heyday in the late 60s and early 70s. Furthermore, we view this as only the starting point for greater success.

Take heart!

**Mike Bullock**  
Walsall

## THANK YOU ALL

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to my retirement present. I was overwhelmed by so many kind thoughts and good wishes for my future. I thank you most sincerely. I loved my job as Membership Secretary. The builders and members with whom I was involved daily brought me into contact with the reality of Toc H. Since its beginnings the world has changed radically but basically the people we endeavour to help, and their needs, are exactly the same and the ethos of Toc H will never be outdated.

So - 'Where there is hatred, let us help to bring love; and where there is darkness let us bring light'. We all need to be valued. We all need to be loved. And Toc H is about all these things. Long may it last!

**Hazel Scarlett**  
Wendover

## PRAYERS FOR PEACE

Between June 29 and July 3 I was at Summer Madness, Ireland's largest Christian youth festival, held in South Belfast. The most amazing thing was that there were 2,500 Christians, of all denominations, camping there and worshipping God. Just two or three miles away there was violence in North Belfast. I felt very strongly that God was calling me to do something for peace in Northern Ireland. As I live in

Skegness there is not much that I can do but since I got back home I have phoned my friends and asked them to pray for peace in Northern Ireland. It would be wonderful if readers of Point 3 would do the same. I personally believe that these prayers will be answered. It may be a long time but God does answer prayer, which will change lives just as peace in Northern Ireland will.

**Cate Leonard**  
Skegness

## A PLACE OF PEACE

We should always remember that when the founders of Toc H returned from Poperinge they did so on a Crusade for Peace.

**Keith Rea**  
Axminster

## TUBBY'S KEYS

Unlike Anne Fletcher (Letters, August) I am 93. In 1924 or 25 I was a member of a school party, which was met by Tubby Clayton at the door of his offices on Tower Hill. He was to take us on a tour of Toc H activities in the area. Before doing so, he excused himself for a moment. He re-entered the building and returned with two objects in his hands. He explained that these were the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom on earth - his Bible and his cheque book. This impressed me and since that time I have supported the work of Toc H.

**Anthony Bull**  
London

## TRIBUTE TO MY MOTHER

As a tribute to my mother, Edna, I have printed a little book of her 'Poetic Thoughts and Paintings'. In the foreword I wrote - 'Both my parents, as Christians and Toc H members, lived a life of service to others'. I remember going to Toc H with my mother at an early age and I remember the Toc H ladies, dressed in gypsy costumes, singing to a group of old people. I have recently been in touch with two of these 'gypsies', Evelyn Osborne and May Scobie, both now in their 90s. Many thanks to the members of Plympton branch, who welcomed me warmly (and bought some of my books!).

**Maria Bojanitz**  
Wembury, near Plymouth

# MY FAVOURITE PRAYER

*This month we print two prayers, which together bracket the day. Ruth Cockerill, of Llandudno Branch, writes that she was given the following prayer by a dear friend who said that it was her 'start to the day'. Now it is Ruth's as well, every day.*

## Listening to God

This morning as I wait on Thee  
Wilt Thou reveal dear Lord  
Some message which Thou hast for me  
Within Thy holy word

Then draw me closer still to Thee  
In humble earnest prayer  
That those with whom I meet may say  
I've been with Jesus here.

So may I live this unknown day  
Beside Thee from the start  
Thy presence with me all the way  
Thy word within my heart.

*And Olive Phipps, from Houghton-on-the-Hill, Leicester, shares the prayer below which, she says, she has been saying every night since she was about four years old. She is now 78.*

Lord keep us safe this night  
Secure from all our foes  
May angels guard us while we sleep  
Till morning light appears.

# OBITUARIES

## In July

William Mellor	Stockport
Dorothy Bullock	Trimley
George Shone	Buckley
Frederick Winch	Exeter
Dorothy Davison	Huddersfield
Cecelia Hutchings	Weymouth
Edna Mayes	Rushden

## In August

Kathleen Burditt	Melton Mowbray
Hilda Smith	Southport
Walter Fox	Birmingham District
Eric Frankland	N. East Region
Robert Glenfield	N. Wales and N. West Region

## Alexander

Gregory-Hood	London District
Margery Whitcomb	E. Devon
Bryan Hodshon	Cosham and Waterlooville
Anne Booth	Dover
Stan Smart	S. West Region

## In September

Gordon Francis	S. East Region
Edith Evans	Mid East Region
L.W. (Bill) Halsey	S. Region
	Project Branch

# 60 YEARS IN WALSALL

*At a recent meeting of Walsall Branch, Graham Stevenson, the 'oldest inhabitant' gave a thumbnail sketch of the branch history. We reprint extracts here...*

**1938.** Regular weekly jobs were the hospital library and visiting the long-stay patients in the local T.B. Sanatorium. Frequent jobs were running jumble sales for the Mayor's Boot Fund, and for running costs of the annual Toc H camp for poor children, and Christmas parcels for the elderly. Poor people were not hard to find in those days

Later in the year, with terrible things beginning to happen on the continent, we found ourselves entertaining Jewish refugee children. Most, if not all, of them were never to see their parents again.

**1939.** Carrying on as before, but about June/July let the A.R.P. use our room for distribution and fitting of civilian respirators. Later in the year helped to man the Wolverhampton Toc H Forces Club. Yes, the War had started.

**1940.** Still carrying on. We opened our own Forces Club and were presented with a mobile canteen. The

club was manned 24 hours daily, and we did a tour of all the AFS posts, ARP posts, gun sites, Local Defence Volunteer posts etc between 9-0 p.m. and 2-0 a.m. every night.

**1942 onwards.** Still carrying on, but without yours truly who was, with most of the other young men of the branch, in the forces.

**1946 onwards.** The branch was at a low ebb and in an effort to re-start the Bloxwich Branch which had closed early in the War, we ran our first blood-donor recruiting campaign, door to door, with the combined object of getting new members. It was a limited success, but the blood donor campaign was the start of an involvement to which we are still committed. Some members, ex-servicemen, sold poppies at Remembrance Day, and still do. In July '48 our hospital library was, in common with all the voluntary hospital libraries throughout the country, 'nationalised' by the newly formed Red Cross and St. John Libraries Division, but we were invited to man the Men's Ward of the General Hospital which we did until 1989. For many years we also ran a

weekly Bingo Club at Age Concern. A member is also a volunteer at a Day Hospice.

Our social activities over the years have included trips to all the national festivals, Talbot House, Normandy, Paris, Rome, Athens, Istanbul, Tunisia, Morocco, Yugoslavia and Spain, not forgetting Dor Knap, Weirside, Lindridge etc.

Yes, I'm glad I joined!



*Walsall Branch's initiative to recruit blood donors led to a national Toc H campaign in 1996. Since then a number of other branches have maintained this on an annual basis. Among these are the branches in Swindon and Barkingside. Our photo shows a recent recruitment day in Ilford, run by Barkingside Branch, at which over 170 new donors were recruited.*

## TRIBUTES

Rushden Toc H lost a very valued member in July when **Edna Mayes** died. Typically, Edna had been doing an errand for a friend when she fell and fractured her hip and shoulder. Edna was always willing to help. She had a great reputation for tea-making and was a very capable treasurer of the Rushden Toc H room. She represented Toc H on the Rushden Hospital After-care Committee and for many years organised the Poppy Day Appeal for a large area of the town. She enjoyed many trips to Poperinge and also the annual Carol Service at All Hallows. Her numerous acts of kindness will be remembered by many of us; we have lost a true and loyal friend. **GL**

**Albert James Desmond (Des) Buckley**, a long standing member of both Eltham and Charlton Branches, died on 14th August 2001 at St Christopher's Hospice. He was well known in Toc H Shooters Hill district, where he was instrumental in setting up the first District Executive Committee in 1975, and becoming secretary, with Alan Ridgeon (Chair) and Jackie Davidson (treasurer) as well maintaining an active branch life. He was also actively involved in All Hallows by the Tower as a guide for

many years. He was a freeman of the City of London. A frequent visitor to Talbot House, Poperinge he will be missed by his friends in both Belgium and Britain. **JD/HN**

**Hilda Smith** (nee Greaves, and Buckley) who died in August was a member for over 60 years, firstly for about six years in Oldham and then as a very dependable member of Southport Branch. Always keen and enthusiastic, she held each of the officer's roles, and she excelled as branch pilot, with great wisdom and understanding. A keen pianist, she often entertained members, friends and in the Rest Homes. Hilda was a keen letter-writer, keeping in touch with many friends. Though lately in a Rest Home herself, she attended meetings whenever possible, saying she would never give up Toc H as long as she lived. Her wish was granted. A true Toc H member, never to be forgotten. **SMB**

It is some years since Sprowston Branch closed in 1984, but since that time, despite advancing years, former members have continued to give

service in the community. One of these was **Jack Lee**, who died in July. Jack, with a friendly and pleasant manner, participated in the many branch projects. One of these, in early post-War years, was the Hospital Commentaries from the Norwich City football ground at Carrow Road to local hospitals. He was Branch chairman among many offices he held which highlighted his dedication and enthusiasm. He will indeed be sadly missed. **LL**

**Stan Smart**, who died in September aged 74, was a most loyal and regular member of Chard Branch and, despite his blindness, supported Toc H events in the District and Region as well. He excelled at quizzes, where his excellent memory enabled the branch to shine. **DT**

**Gordon Francis**, who was a member of Coney Hall Branch until it shut, died in September aged 87. He greatly valued the ethos of Toc H and the friendships he made in the Branch. One of his last visitors before he went into hospital was a friend he had made on a Toc H trip to Poperinge over a decade ago. **VB**

# NOTICE BOARD

## TEDDY BEAR EXTRAVAGANZA

Don't forget the great Toc H TEDDY BEAR EXTRAVAGANZA at the International Gateshead Stadium on Thursday 25th October - 12 noon to 3-0 p.m.

Bring a Teddy bear, a picnic to share, and children who care. See the globetrotting bears set off to all parts of the world - as guests of four British Airways cabin crews - in a contest to see which can travel furthest in a month. Watch Knockout Sports with the Leeds Tigers professional basketball team.

Enjoy a guest appearance by girl band Devotion.

Meet the BBC Radio Newcastle Roadshow.

...and many other attractions.

ENTRANCE FREE - but every adult must carry a bear!

Give us a ring on 01296 623911

if you can come, or Email us at

info@toch.org.uk



## CAROL SERVICE

The annual Carol Service at All Hallows by the Tower will take place on 15th December, at 2-30 p.m. This year the organisers wish to put the accent on 'Family', and we hope members will bring their families to this happy occasion. As usual, mince pies and mulled wine will be served after the service.

Before the Service there will be lunch at the Ensign Youth Club in Wellclose Square (the home of the Toc H East London Family Project). You are invited from 11-0 (not before) to meet and talk, and then lunch about 12.30. The cost of lunch is £5. Lifts will be provided from Tower Hill Tube station from 11-0 onwards, and then back to Tower Hill for the service itself.

If you want a lunch you MUST book in advance by sending your £5 to Tony Cock, 7 Tournay Close, Lympne, Hythe, Kent CT21 4LL.

The service itself is free, but it is hoped people will give generously to the collection to help defray costs.

## WEIRSIDE in the Lake District

Please note that the Bookings Secretary is now: Trevor Whatmore, 4 Birchfield Avenue, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton, WV6 8TH. Tel: 01902 753795. Email: trevorww@easynet.co.uk

## CHRISTMAS CARDS

Now available from Central Services - 3 designs - Doves, Peace and Wise Men.

All 3.75 x 5 - in packs of 10 (all of one design) @ £1.25 plus 25p p/p per pack.

Or, to save the 25p p/p, you can order now and ask your Central Councillor to collect the order for you at Central Council.

Please make it clear, if you DO order, whether you want them sent by post or via Central Council. All cheques should be payable to 'Toc H'.

## THE TOWER OF LONDON CHILDREN'S BEACH

Tubby Clayton had many, many bright ideas! Some, perhaps many, were unachievable. One of the more successful ones, however, was the creation, in 1934, of a children's beach on the Thames by the Tower of London. Tubby had long been concerned about the lack of play space for East End children, and he also noticed that children used to go to play or swim on the foreshore at low tide - but to do so was dangerous as the incoming tide often cut off the access stairs.



Initially the beach was created by barge loads of shingle but, in 1936, 200 cubic yards of clean Essex sand was deposited and remained virtually intact on the site. Even in its first year there were 70,000 visits to the beach and this rose to 100,000 in 1935.

The whole story, including more detail of Tubby's work with the Tower Hill Improvement Trust, is set out in a booklet written by Rose Baillie on behalf of the City of London Archaeological Society. It is available from her at £3 (which includes post and packing).

To get a copy, write to her at 15 Escuan Lodge, Aberdeen Park, London N5 2AP.

**NB.** Rose is very keen to hear from anyone who has personal or family memories of the beach, or of any of the special events which took place there, as she is hoping to produce a second edition with more material.

## DIRECT LINES

Just a reminder that, if you are calling Central Services at Wendover, you can dial direct to staff there. The numbers are:-

Margaret Winstanley	01296 626207
Angela Gregory	01296 626209
Sally Courtney	01296 626208
Tony McMullen	01296 626211
Michael Tomlinson	01296 626201

## TOCTALK

A new way of exchanging views and comments with other member.

On the Toc H website (www.toch.org.uk) we have now closed down the DotCom Branch, and replaced it with TocTalk. This is a 'Message Board'. You can visit it to see what others have said, and to add your own comments. It is divided into four sections - General, The Volunteer Programme, Fund-raising ideas and Swapshop.

To go to it, click on TocTalk on the Menu on the left hand side of the Home Page, then click on 'Go to TocTalk Message Board' and then click on one of the four headings below the Line saying 'Forum'. There is no need to 'Log in' or 'Register'.